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SUBJECT: USG FOREIGN POLICY ON THE MIDDLE EAST; US PRESIDENT BUSH
URGING FOR A DEMOCRATIC CHANGE IN CUBA; FOREIGN JOURNALISTS TO CUBA;
FRICTION BETWEEN ARGENTINA AND THE IMF; AMBASSADOR WAYNE; 08/04/06

1. SUMMARY STATEMENT

Today's key international stories include the USG's policy towards the Middle East; US President Bush urging Cubans to undertake democratic change on the island; the trouble met by foreign journalists in reaching Cuba; friction between the Argentine Government and the IMF; and the Trade Transparency Unit Program between the US and Argentine Custom Houses.

Daily-of-record "La Nacion," leading "Clarín," left-of-center "Pagina 12," business-financial "El Cronista" and wire service "Infosic" carry the PAS press release about Ambassador Wayne's announcement that he will arrive in the country in approximately three months.

2. OPINION PIECES AND KEY STORIES

- "A return to the past"

Claudio Mario Aliscioni, international columnist of leading "Clarín," writes (08/04) "'Constructive case' is the concept used now in US academic centers when trying to explain US strategy in the Middle East, which is certainly agreed upon by the current Israeli administration.

"The theory is based on some view of USG's neo-conservatives... By misusing some concepts from renowned philosophers like German Leo Strauss, this school defends the military solution for problems and it despises the complex meanders of political discussion.

"However, 'constructive chaos' has proved to be an illusion rather than an example of effectiveness - some examples are the Iraqi 'quagmire,' the unsolved situation in Afghanistan, the ongoing clash with Iran. The security fringe in Lebanon is another thread of the same weave.

"The current situation revisits the moment when Israel invaded Lebanon two decades ago, just as though experience were useless."

- "Bush urges Cubans to undertake 'democratic change' on the island"

Daily-of-record "La Nacion" reports (08/04) "US President George W. Bush urged Cubans to 'undertake democratic change on the island,' while Miami exiles called for a civil-military uprising in the Caribbean country...

"... Bush's statements went beyond a previous statement by the US Department of State asking Cuban exiles to stay in the country and work for a 'positive change' on the island. This comment hinted that

Washington fears an exodus of exiles from the Caribbean island."

- "The trouble faced by foreign media in reaching Cuba"

Leading "Clarín" carries an opinion piece by Oscar Raul Cardoso, international analyst, who writes (08/04) "The term 'normality' has become the favorite word in Cuba. With Fidel Castro sick and distanced from the handling of State affairs for the first time in almost 50 years, the Cuban government faces a huge challenge - trying to continue working with or without Castro."

"... There is a conflict between two antagonistic views about the institutional situation on the island - the 'normality,' which is being promoted by Havana's official voices and that of the international media, according to which there is a booming crisis which the government is badly trying to disguise."

"Yesterday, it was made public that six journalists who had just arrived in Havana were compelled to return home..."

"The International Media Center in Cuba denied that this could be part of an 'informational siege' on the island, but it is known that journalistic visas are today delayed, according to repeated reports from embassies and consulates in Cuba."

- "The new US ambassador will arrive in the country in three months"

Leading "Clarín" reports (08/04) "The new US Ambassador to Argentina, Earl Anthony Wayne, said he is 'delighted' by his nomination for this position, and he announced he will arrive in the country within three months."

"The US embassy released a communiqué signed by (Ambassador) Wayne following the confirmation of his nomination as US Ambassador to Argentina. 'I am delighted that the US Senate has confirmed my

nomination as the next US Ambassador to Argentina. I am deeply honored that US President George W. Bush has nominated me for this position as per the Secretary of State's recommendation.'

"Wayne added that he wishes to 'closely work with the Argentine government and people to strengthen ties between our two great nations.'"

- "US Ambassador will arrive in November"

Daily-of-record "La Nación" (08/04) reports "According to the US Department of State, US Ambassador to Argentina Earl Anthony Wayne will arrive in Buenos Aires in November... Wayne expressed his satisfaction at his nomination after having overcome the hurdles placed by exiled Cuban lobbyists at the US Senate."

- "Wayne's satisfaction"

Business-financial "El Cronista" reports (08/04) "The new US Ambassador to Argentina, Earl Anthony Wayne, who will arrive in November, expressed his satisfaction that the US Senate confirmed his nomination."

- "The new US Ambassador to Argentina maintains he wishes to 'closely work with the Argentine Government'"

Wire service "Infosic" reports (08/04) "Earl Anthony Wayne, who was nominated as US Ambassador to Argentina, will arrive in the country during the first days of November, and he maintained that he wishes 'to closely work with the Government,' with the purpose 'of strengthening ties between our two great nations.'"

- "'I am delighted'"

Left-of-center "Página 12" reports (08/04) "The US Senate confirmed the nomination of Earl Anthony Wayne as the new US Ambassador to Argentina. In a press communiqué, Lino Gutiérrez's successor said 'I am deeply honored that the President has nominated me for this position.' Wayne and his wife will arrive in Buenos Aires no later than the first days of November..."

"Wayne will arrive in the country to 'normalize' ties between Washington and Buenos Aires, which were impaired at the Mar del Plata Summit of the Americas.

"... The Argentine Foreign Ministry positively assessed Wayne's nomination because they see him as a 'serious' and 'good interlocutor.' However, some in the diplomatic circle believe that his nomination reflects some distancing in the White House's consideration because Wayne does not have ties with George Bush's team like Gutierrez did."

- "Bush could enlarge Guantnamo"

Left-of-center "Pagina 12" (08/04) "Far from closing Guantnamo detention center, the Bush administration will enlarge it. In addition to building a new prison in Guantanamo, the White House submitted a new plan to judge terrorist suspects outside of usual legal proceedings.

"The proposal, which is being analyzed by the US Senate, was criticized by different experts for leaving indicted criminals unprotected.

"Bush needs to pass this draft bill in order to replace the ad hoc military courts system, which was considered illegal by the US Supreme Court of Justice last June."

- "Friction with the IMF continues"

Leading "Clarín" carries an op-ed piece by economic columnist Marcelo Bonelli, who writes (08/04) "The international business community criticized and questioned Argentina's economic program during two top-level meetings that were held in Washington - the IMF Board meeting, in which a work by Anoop Singh, the head of the IMF Western Department, was discussed, and a parallel meeting of the IDB Board. During the two meetings, G7 leaders objected to the gist of the country's economic strategy - the monetary expansion, the fiscal policy and the anti-inflation control.

"They also questioned the lack of structural reforms - tax reform, public rates reform and a definitive solution for the still defaulting debt.

"Washington officials expressed the opinion of international

bankers, the headquarters of companies controlling privatized services and food multinational corporations. They all agree on this point but do not make it public due to fears of the liberal sector of the local establishment."

13. EDITORIALS

- "Custom houses and trade transparency"

An editorial in daily-of-record "La Nación" reads (08/04) "The Argentine Tax Board and the US Embassy implemented an interesting trade transparency program through a special software and technology, which will allow for the exchange of information between the Argentine and US Customs Houses.

"The Trade Transparency Unit Program (TTUP) will allow the Argentine Tax Board to monitor some seven million dollars in transactions between the US and Argentina.

"... The challenges posed by the struggle against transnational organized crime call for human and technological efforts as well as the political decision to fight it...

"... The TTU adopted by the US and Argentine Custom houses is a significant milestone in the fight on organized crime."

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